

the Banner of Truth

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and every branch that beareth fruit, He purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit." JOHN 15:1&2*



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Rev. J. den Hoed, Editor
972 Hemlock Loop, Lynden, WA 98264
Home: 360-354-0210 • Study/Fax: 360-354-0216

Rev. A.H. Verhoef, Assistant Editor
1142 Lakeshore Road W., St. Catharines, ON L2R 6P9
905-935-4934

Rev. P. Kleijer, Assistant Editor
54-90022 RR 211, Lethbridge County, AB T1J 5N9
403-380-1984

James Okken, Managing Editor
3 Joseph Court, Hackettstown, NJ 07840-4664
973-809-2112 • Fax: 973-381-1483 • E-mail: jamesokken79@gmail.com

Mike Greendyk, Subscription Manager
2 Krasco Road, Oak Ridge, NJ 07438
862-462-5201 • E-mail: nrcbannersubscriptions@yahoo.com

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Meditation

The Child in the Manger

Rev. J. den Hoed, Lynden, WA

(Taken from the December 1997 issue of *The Banner of Truth*)

“And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped Him in swaddling clothes, and laid Him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn” (Luke 2:7).

This month we commemorate Christmas, the time that Christ was born. Who among us can fathom the true meaning of this? Should we not stand still a moment with some serious thoughts pertaining to death and eternity? We may see how God from heaven has given a way, and now He who is that Way has come upon the earth. Zacharias spoke of that Way in Luke 1:78-79, “Through the tender mercy of our God; whereby the Dayspring from on high hath visited us, to give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.”

When we reflect upon the miracle of His birth, then the first thing we should do is look above the manger. There can be no Christmas unless there has been a glance above the manger. By nature, we would rather look into the world; there we will see what man has made of Christmas. There we see the millions of artificial lights and the many presents which are exchanged. Yes, the world also celebrates Christmas. You can see it in all the festivities. The world has Christmas today, but tomorrow the world will turn off the lights, and then the Christmas of the world is over.

What is to be seen above the manger? We see these words written, “For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son” (John 3:16a). In these words, we see the love of God for His world. For the world? This is not the world as we see it, not the world that is sinking deeper and deeper into darkness, waiting for the final judgment day. This text is speaking of the world of God’s elect, the world which is precious in His sight. God so loved the world that He gave so much for that world; He gave His only begotten Son.

How is it possible that the Lord can give eternal life unto His people? To do so, He gave that which is the dearest unto Him. What is it that is most precious unto Him? It is His only begotten Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. He had to humble Him and lay Him in the deepest humiliation, sending Him upon this sin-cursed earth and placing Him under the demands of the holy law of God. The Lord laid His wrath and anger upon His Son, for He alone can carry this weight. He alone, that Babe in the manger, can save the elect world of God. That is such a wonder.

The Word of God tells us about many acts of God—acts of His power and of His majesty. We find in Scripture that the Lord dried up the Red Sea so that His people might

pass through on dry ground. He rained manna upon His people for forty years to feed them. He also split the rock and gave them water to drink. Here, we see the greatest wonder of all, “Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call His name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us” (Matthew 1:23).

We see the promised Messiah, David’s greater Son, lying in a manger. He was not born in a palace, nor in the inn. There was no room for Him there. God wanted Him to be born in a manger, in the stable. There the Lord wanted His state of humiliation to begin. It says in Luke 2:12b, “Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.” The Lord Jesus was wrapped in long, white pieces of cloth. Heaven wanted Him to bow so deeply that He was wrapped in all the sins of the entire Church of God. He descended so deeply. The burden of the sin of His people was placed upon Him. It would bring Him to Gethsemane and then to Golgotha. It would cause Him to cry out, “My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?”

He was rejected when He came upon this earth among His own people. There was no place for Him; “His own received Him not” (John 1:11b). He is also rejected today. Just look around you. We do not need to look very far, for we need to look only within our own heart. If we have only the Christmas of this world, and if the Christmas of the manger does not mean anything to us, if we miss that humble bowing before God with a need for a Saviour, then He is rejected by us, rejected by you and me. He knew that by nature we would reject such a Saviour. Our nature is such that, even after receiving grace, we long to make it on our own and do not need a Saviour.

He also knew that the wrath of God is everlasting. He knew that there would come a time in the garden of Gethsemane that the bloody sweat would be pressed out of Him under the holy wrath of God. He would be forsaken of God because the hell of His people was a hell that He must close for them. He must suffer for His people because God could not forgive them unless the price was paid in full.

Yet He came, wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger. That is the wonder of Christmas. He came that He might open heaven for those who had closed it. He came that He might close that pit, that dark pit, which we have opened.

Come, cast a glance in the manger. There lies an Almighty God. There lies the Creator of heaven and earth. There lies a small child, in His human nature. He is the salvation of God’s Church. He is wrapped in swaddling clothes; yet how rich He is, how wonderfully rich. He calls to the hungering

and thirsting ones, saying that there is a storehouse with Him which can never be emptied. He is so rich that He can melt the hardest heart. Today, in 2024, He can still do that. He alone can give light unto those who sit in darkness. He alone can give that blood of cleansing and that robe of righteousness.

Christ, that Babe in the manger, is the Rock of salvation. Outside of that Rock you will sink away. Outside of that Rock there is nothing but the deepest abyss. Upon that Rock He brings His Church. Blessed people, who with the eye of faith, may behold that Rock lying in the manger, and now, if you have to die, do you have a Saviour? Are you standing upon that Rock? Outside of that Rock we are lost; upon that Rock we see God's name glorified and His people saved.

There cannot be true Christmas without the Holy Ghost. Think about that. He is the One who must apply the Christmas message to your heart. He breaks and opens the heart. He is the One who from all eternity, in that eternal counsel, also gave His approval. He is the One who came and overshadowed Mary. We read in God's Word, in that tender portion, that the Holy Ghost came upon her and she conceived in her womb. He is the One who brought the Saviour upon this earth.

Oh, that the Spirit would make Him known among us and that the precious benefits obtained by that only Saviour may be blessed unto our heart! Our eyes would then be opened for the deep and awesome abyss between God and our soul, for the great and terrible guilt that is ours, and for the hard and stony heart lying within. May He bring us to

the knowledge of a sorrowing heart, to the place where we may spread empty hands to Him, who alone can fill them, there to cry the publican's prayer, "God be merciful to me a sinner."

Then the wonderful benefits obtained by this Saviour may be made known unto His dear children. They may experience what it is to be emptied of all that is of self, stripped of all the coverings which they have woven to cover a polluted nakedness, and pushed off all the foundations which they have laid. Only then will room be made for that only Saviour. May He lay a true hunger in the hearts of God's people so that He may be established in their lives by the Father who has given Him.

Christmas for the Church of God means seeing and knowing the Way that has been opened from heaven for **my** soul. There lies a Saviour in the manger. He delivers from sin and brings back what was lost. Are you poor? He is rich. Do you have no covering? He has the robe

of righteousness. Are you sorrowing? He can comfort the sorrowing. Are you hungering? He is the Bread of Life. He calls unto you from the manger, saying, "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden." He calls unto you from the manger, "For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord" (Luke 2:11).

He was laid in the lowest place so that He may be the Saviour of His people. At the end of His life on earth, He shall be exalted to the highest place at the Father's right hand so that His Church may be governed and loved from heaven by such a Saviour. □

*There cannot be true Christmas without the Holy Ghost. Think about that.
He is the One who must apply the Christmas message to your heart.
He breaks and opens the heart.
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Bible Study

The Names of the Mediator (12)

Rev. C. Neele (1962-2022) & Rev. A. Schot, Nunspeet, the Netherlands
(Translated from the 2010 issues of *De Saambinder*)

Fountain

*"In that day there shall be a **fountain** opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness" (Zechariah 13:1).*

Zechariah prophesies about the same Fountain of which the bride from the Song of Solomon also speaks: "A fountain of gardens, a well of living waters."

What is a fountain? The original word means spring. A fountain is not a cistern but a well of water. It is a subter-

ranean wellspring, constantly giving water. Even in times of great drought, a fountain continues to flow. Moreover, the water of a fountain is called living water as opposed to stagnant water. It is very suitable for drinking and for cleaning oneself. Is this not a beautiful picture for the all-sufficiency of Christ? The Mediator is a spiritual fountain against sin and against uncleanness. Everyone who partakes of that living water experiences the thirst-quenching and cleansing effect.

When will that Fountain be opened? "In that day." That is

at the time of the New Testament, especially after the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. We read in the context of our text, "And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon Me whom they have pierced." We see this happening on the Day of Pentecost. "Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?" The Holy Spirit begins to convince of sin, righteousness, and judgment, but is it not the same Spirit who will soon open up a Fountain for these thirsty sinners? To drink from this Fountain must be given. Read about it in the history of the Samaritan woman. Sin (guilt) and uncleanness (pollution) point to two benefits: justification and sanctification. Both of these benefits flow from this fountain of salvation.

To whom will this Fountain be opened? "To the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem." Does this Fountain not have any value for us? We saw that the name fountain is used as a metaphor. It is an allusion to the fountain Siloam in John 9:7. Similarly, we need not limit the expression "house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem" here to its literal meaning. Certainly, it had meaning for them and will still have meaning, but we read of this Fountain in Luke 24:47 "And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." The annotator rightly understands by it "the believing children of God." One may understand by it the whole multitude of believers from Jew and Gentile. Why is this Fountain opened only for believing children of God? Well, it is a spiritual Fountain. One cannot draw from it with reason or emotion but only with the bucket of faith.

—April 15, 2010, Rev. A. Schot

Gift

"If thou knewest the *gift* of God..." (John 4:10b).

The word "gift" means present. It is something that is given voluntarily. There is no obligation whatsoever. In this sense, the Old Testament speaks of a gift that a person brings to the temple. There is a distinction between

a gift and a sacrifice. A sacrifice was an obligation. It had to be brought according to the precept of the Lord. A gift was not obligatory but was given out of love.

Christ is both sacrifice and gift at the same time. He had obligated Himself to bring the sacrifice. By doing so, He wanted to glorify God's virtues. In this way, sinners could be saved. This could not happen without a sacrifice, but it is a miracle that Christ gave Himself to be the sacrificial Lamb. This was voluntary love on His part.

In John 4, the Lord Jesus speaks to the Samaritan woman. He calls Himself the Gift of God. The emphasis here is not so much on the love of Christ, but on the love of the Father. The gift of the Father is His Son. The annotation with this text refers to Romans 8:32: "He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?" Christ speaks to the Samaritan woman about the Father's good pleasure. The woman did not know the eternal Gift but the Lord Jesus Himself wanted to teach her about it. He Himself is the Gift of God!

The Father gave His Son out of voluntary love so that reconciliation with Him would be possible. What a miracle if we may look upon Christ in this way. In His name Gift is not only indicated the foundation of salvation but also the riches to be found in this Gift. Paul writes in the letter to the Colossians: "In whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." In the Gift of God is wisdom and knowledge. In Christ is wisdom to understand the things of the Spirit of God. In Him also is the knowledge to understand the depth that He is given of the Father. Then in this Gift lies everything a lost sinner needs. The Lord Jesus speaks of this when He says: "If thou knewest the gift of God..." These words were spoken at Shechem. We may well call this city the place of the gift. After all, the Lord promised there to give Abram the land of Canaan. The Lord made it come true. Even now the Gift of God can be given to Samaritan outsiders.

—April 22, 2010, Rev. C. Neele

(To be continued)

Admonition to Christian Charity

There is an infinite distance and disproportion between God and man; yet He came over all that to love man. What difficulty should I have, then, to place my affection on my equal at worst, and often better? There cannot be any proportionable distance between the highest and lowest, between the richest and poorest, between the wisest and the most ignorant, between the most gracious and the most ungodly, as there is between the infinite God and a finite angel. Should, then, the mutual infirmities and failings of Christians be an insuperable and impassable gulf, as between heaven and hell, that none can pass over by a bridge of love to either?

—Hugh Binning



A Word in Season

New Year's Eve and New Year's Day

Rev. A.F. Honkoop (1921-2008)

(Translated from the December 29, 2016 issue of *De Saambinder*)

“If Thou, LORD, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand? But there is forgiveness with Thee, that Thou mayest be feared” (Psalm 130:3&4).

Another whole year lies behind us again—a year filled with thousands of sins and iniquities, with innumerable wrongdoings committed against God and our neighbor—but we would rather not think about that. All these things we would rather forget; yet it is not finished once sin and evil are committed. Something remains, namely guilt, debt to God. We live on as ones who are making debts.

Debt increased

Even in the past year, our debt has again increased tremendously, but who believes this? Oh, certainly, we do confess this intellectually; we do acknowledge it by virtue of upbringing and confession, yet we do not see and believe it as it really is. We can and sometimes even dare to look down on others and think we have done better than they, but who sees how it truly is? Oh, to this end the discovering light of the Holy Spirit is so indispensable.

God Himself must make us see how it is; then it also becomes terrible. We may have distinguished ourselves somewhat from others outwardly, but we are going to see what our way is before God. Oh, if God were to show us the past year in *this* manner, terror would take hold of us. Yes, we would cry out, “Woe unto me, that I have sinned!”

From morning to evening

While on our way, there was not only a single sin; there were not several sins, but our life was sin only and nothing but iniquity—sins from day to day, from morning to evening, sins committed against a holy and righteous God, and these sins cannot be made right. With tears and prayers, we cannot blot out our sins before God’s holy face. We are subject to the wrath and curse of heaven. Moreover, it is not only *this* evil that calls for punishment, not only the sins of *this* one year. No, our whole life is an accumulation and sequence of sin and guilt. Yes, even more, we are shapen in iniquity. It is not only actual sin but also original guilt that makes us damnable before God. Oh, seeing this, we will begin to cry out, “If Thou, LORD, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand?”

Forgiveness for His sake

No, if God deals with us after our sins and rewards us according to our iniquities, then it is lost forever, but the poet added, “But there is forgiveness with Thee.” Oh, for guilty ones there is a way out; there is forgiveness, not with people but with God, who will have mercy on guilty sinners.

Oh, this applies at the end of a year and at the beginning of a year, “There is forgiveness with Thee”—with God, who wants to blot out sins for His sake. What a privilege it would be to need God for that. Yes, with the knowledge that there is forgiveness with the Lord, we can also begin a new year.

We may begin a new year with all kinds of good resolutions, with a hope of doing things well now, with a resolution of doing much for God and His service, etc., but all this will come to nothing. From us no fruit will ever be found. Also in the coming year, we will not deny ourselves

in thoughts, words, and deeds, and will reveal ourselves to be a faithless generation. Yes, sin will again cling to us in everything, and we will not be able to do anything except always corrupting everything.

The poet added, however, “But there is forgiveness with Thee.” Oh, for guilty ones there is still a way of escape, there is forgiveness, no, not with men,

but with God—God who will have mercy on guilty sinners.

Comfort and encouragement

Even God’s people, though they would like it otherwise, cannot but make the Lord to serve with their sins and weary Him with their iniquities. And ah, then we would lose all courage; then we dare not and could not go any farther, but how comforting and encouraging it may be to know that there is forgiveness with the Lord. With the Lord is the opened Fountain for sin and for uncleanness—with the Lord who says, “Fury is not in Me.”

Oh, people, with this God we can go on, we can enter the New Year. With this God we can travel on, relying on Him, on His eternal love, on His divine faithfulness, on His mercies and boundless compassions. If there were *no* forgiveness, we could not, we would dare not, we would not want to go on, but...there is forgiveness with God. With this knowledge we can go forward joyfully. □

Even God's people, though they would like it otherwise, cannot but make the Lord to serve with their sins and weary Him with their iniquities. And ah, then we would lose all courage; then we dare not and could not go any farther, but how comforting and encouraging it may be to know that there is forgiveness with the Lord.



From Our Inheritance

Every Winter Draws Me Nearer to My End

James Bourne (1773-1854)

(Taken from *James Bourne: His Life and Letters*)

My dear friend,

Every winter draws me nearer to my end, and I am made to feel it must be very soon, and I am anxiously seeking the Lord that He would be with me. When I look within, I am filled with alarms and think there can be no hope for me. A heavy cloud gathers over all that I have believed the Lord has wrought, and I see nothing before me but darkness. This brings about very serious work, and I ponder my way; often, unknown to all, I think that I feel the near approach of death and not the **LIVELY HOPE** which alone can support at that time. Prayer seems unheard and the fountain sealed; I dare not be contented with what I used to hear in my younger days from professors who told me that they did not trust in frames and feelings.

Where the soul is insensible to the frowns and rebukes of the Lord, there can be no access to a throne of grace. What is all religion without communion with the Father through Christ and the Spirit sealing the truth and reality of these things? I always suspect people when they begin to charge their deadness and slothfulness on God's sovereignty and not on their own sin. David says, "One thing have I desired of the **LORD**, that will I seek after." It was that he might dwell in the sensible presence of the Lord all the days of his life; and he adds, "For in the time of trouble [and such is death, the last and worst conflict] He shall hide me in His pavilion: in the secret of His tabernacle shall He hide me; He shall set me upon a rock"—the Rock of ages. O how difficult it is to get there and more difficult to continue!

When the judgments of God are abroad in the earth, the children of the world appear as careless as ever, but I am made to stand in awe and feel I cannot fathom His dispensations, nor know what judgment my sins may provoke the Lord to send upon me. I like David's expressions—"Thou art my Hiding Place;" and "I flee unto Thee to hide me." A day seldom passes but I pray, "Enter not into judgment with me, O Lord, for in Thy sight shall no flesh living be justified." David gives us a beautiful example for our encouragement when he says, "I acknowledged my sin unto Thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the **LORD**; and Thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin." This is the way the Lord deals in mercy with me, but these visits are not so frequent as I need; for the want of them I cannot speak so boldly, without natural fear, as he does—"Surely in the floods of great waters they shall not come nigh unto him" (Psalm 32:5&6b).

You have had a very serious and heavy affliction in part of your family. We never know when these shall appear, but we know they do not come by chance. God says that He stirs up our nest as the eagle, that there may be no strange god with us. It is that we may consider in our heart, that as a man chasteneth his son, so the Lord our God chasteneth us, to bring us into "a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths that spring out of the valleys and hills" (Deuteronomy 32:11 & 8:5-7). So, I trust, we shall find it to the end. ◻

Sutton Coldfield, England, December, 1852

Caution Against a Spurious Humility

Although in approaching the great High Priest, you have no splendid and costly intellectual offerings to present, yet with the royal penitent you can say, "Thou desirest not sacrifice, else would I give it: Thou delightest not in burnt offering. The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise" (Psalm 51:16&17). "This, Lord, is all that I have to bring Thee." Avoid a spurious humility. True humility consists not in denying the work of the Holy Ghost in our heart, in underrating the grace of God in our soul, in standing afar off from our heavenly Father, in walking at a distance from Christ, always doubting the efficacy of His blood, the freeness of His salvation, the willingness of His heart, and the greatness of His power to save. Oh no! This is not the humility that God delights to see, but is a false, counterfeit humility, obnoxious in His sight. To "draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith" (Hebrews 10:22) in lowly dependence upon His blood and righteousness; to accept of salvation as the gift of His grace; to believe the promise because He has spoken it; gratefully and humbly to acknowledge our calling, our adoption, and our acceptance; and to live in the holy, transforming influence of this exalted state, giving to a Triune God all the praise and glory—this is the humility which is most pleasing to God and is the true product of the Holy Ghost.

—Taken from *Morning Thoughts* by Octavius Winslow



Doctrinal Studies

God's Incommunicable Attributes (2)

Rev. A.P. Baaijens, Aagtekerke, the Netherlands

(Translated from the February 4, 2021 issue of *De Saambinder*)

God Is Simple

Last time we dwelt on God's independency, one of the Lord's incommunicable attributes. This time we want to dwell on God's simplicity.

With the word "simple," most people will think of humble or that someone has little intellectual knowledge. We may also be familiar with the expression "simple but true," or translated from the Dutch expression "simplicity is the mark of the true." However, this is not the meaning of the word "simple" when speaking of God. It means that God is one. We may also say "singular."

It means, first of all, that there is only one God. He alone is God. We read in Deuteronomy 6:4, "Hear, O Israel: the LORD our God is one LORD" We have also seen this in the attribute of His independency.

God has no one above or next to Himself. If He did, He would not be independent. He is the sovereign God; therefore, idolatry is an abominable sin. Idolatry is to invent or have something else in place of the one true God or in addition to Him, on which man puts his trust (Heidelberg Catechism, answer 95). We may not serve other (idol) gods.

Has your idolatrous existence already been discovered to you? Has it already become guilt to you? Has it driven you out to the Lord?

The LORD says in Isaiah 44:6b, "I am the first, and I am the last; and beside Me there is no God." Seek this God! He cries out to you, Look unto Me, and be ye saved: for I am God, and there is none else. May you by grace repeat after the poet, "For this God is our God for ever and ever: He will be our guide even unto death" (Psalm 48:15)? Then you have everything for time and eternity.

No contradiction

Secondly, God's simplicity means that in Him there is no composition of different parts or things. We humans are not simple. We consist of soul and body, thus dual (twofold).

In God, everything is one. Without simplicity, God would cease to be God.

There is also no contradiction between His attributes. It is different with people. People often contradict themselves. What a contradiction there can be in a person. One moment someone can feel deeply unhappy, the next moment happy. That can change like a leaf on a tree. How words and deeds can contradict. With the Lord there is no such contradiction. In Him everything is one. It is the same God in His mercy and His justice, in His love and in His wrath. So, one attribute does not exclude the other but, rather, includes the other. Consider the sun. The same sun makes butter melt but hardens clay. It is the same God who reveals Himself in every characteristic. We as humans cannot comprehend this. This, too, is what Elihu said in Job 36:26a: "Behold, God is great, and we know Him not."

God's simplicity means that in Him there is no composition of different parts or things. We humans are not simple. We consist of soul and body, thus dual (twofold). In God, everything is one. Without simplicity, God would cease to be God.

Becomes evident on Golgotha

We tend to contrast the attributes of the Lord. Then we contrast His mercy with His justice. Just read what it says about that in Lord's Day 4. God must and will punish sin temporally and eternally by just judgment, but is God not also

merciful? Yes, "God is indeed merciful, but also just; therefore, His justice requires that sin which is committed against the most high majesty of God be also punished with extreme, that is, with everlasting punishment of body and soul." Do you know this bowing under God's justice?

How it became evident on Golgotha of all places that in God all is one. In Christ's death on the cross, the Lord showed His justice and His mercy. Christ's dying was according to God's justice because of God's wrath over sin, which He could not let go unpunished. At the same time, it was the Lord's mercy that He sent His Son to earth to go the way of death on the cross, to reconcile enemies to Him. Incomprehensible! Has the simplicity of God thus already become a comfort to you? □

(To be continued)

As bread is made of wheat, and wine is made of the grapes, so Christ is made of a woman. His body was part of the flesh and substance of the virgin.

—Thomas Watson



For Young and Old

A Letter from Rev. G. Kuijt, Missionary

(Taken from the December 1963 issue of *The Banner of Truth*)

Dear Mission Committee,

This letter you will receive from Wolo, a deserted mission post because of tribal wars. Wolo lies the closest for the purpose of our next journey, namely, about a two-days' walk. Through the kindness and cooperation of the U.F.M. (Unevangelized Field Mission), we could take this place as our starting point. Two missionaries and I made a reconnaissance of this place first to see how the land lies and what could be done. According to what the missionaries said, the people wanted to receive my wife and me here. Thus, we arrived last week and made our bivouac. We have now received a native hut and consequently had no trouble in building ourselves a house. The houses which stood here originally have been burned or broken down by the people. The natives here are very fond of nails, and they knew that there were many nails in the wood. To obtain those nails, they had to break down the houses. It is our plan to remain here for some time to become acquainted with the people and to learn something of their language. They speak an entirely different language here from the one in Kosarek; thus, we have to start from the beginning again.

We receive great support from our house-boy, Roti, who was kindly given to us by the missionaries of Kelila, from the U.F.M. Some other people from Kelila have come here to help us; and Roti, who speaks the Malayan language, told me that they want to go with us to the new field. They already have accepted the Christian religion and are not afraid to march through the hostile territory of the Illugwa. Roti told me that if the Lord Jesus accompanies us we have nothing to fear. He is about fifteen years old but has a child-like trust in the Lord as also the people of his native tribe from Kelila. Roti helps us in everything and is supported therein by Simin, also a man from Kelila. We told the people that we wanted to tell them about the Lord Jesus, and Sunday we had our first service. From far and wide the people came. The men of Kelila spoke, also Joshua, one of our coworkers, and myself. Roti interpreted what Joshua and I spoke. We now have a gathering every day, and we estimate that there are about two hundred people present. Thus, every day these people come together to hear the Word of God before they go to work in their gardens. The great benefit of our interpreter is that we can now proclaim the dear Word of God daily. Once a week I hope to give catechism instruction to our three coworkers. Their names are Joshua, Isaac, and John. After the service in the morning, we have our policlinic (out-patients' department).

My wife and I have already helped various patients. Saturday there was again a framboesia sufferer. He looked dreadful, full of great sores over his whole body. We had brought some medicine along and could give him an injection. Just this morning the mother came with this little patient again. What a difference! When he came to us the first time, he looked so pitiful; now his terrible sores were about healed, and he laughed again. Being thankful, he gave us a sweet potato. His mother was happy again, too. What a blessing this medical knowledge is!

You can notice that the people at this place are somewhat farther advanced than those at Kosarek. Here they gladly let us help them, and for the slightest ailments they sometimes ask for an injection. We are living in a native hut and are getting along fine. Roti and Simin sleep here also, and we, or at least Roti, cooks our meals. Roti told me yesterday that the people living to the south and east of us had said that they wanted to kill us and our co-workers. Now we must go [on our next journey, about a two-days' walk] through the territory of the Illugwa, and they have always shown themselves to be enemies of the gospel. Therefore, our request is, pray for us. I think that quite often we ourselves do not realize how often we are compassed with dangers. My wife and I train ourselves also in walking, as you will understand. On our trips we are always accompanied by many men and children. It is really pleasant to march with these people. The Lord has given us the wish of our heart. However, we also think back about Kosarek and Nipsan. There we have a responsibility also. Who will come and help us?

Your missionary and his wife

P.S. We further hope that you will remember us at all times. We just had a radio connection with Kelila, and they asked me if we had already come in contact with the Illugwa. As you have already read on the other side of the paper, this tribe is very hostile, and they have said that they would kill us. Nevertheless, the Lord is mighty and all things are possible with Him. Many thanks for sending me *The Banner of Truth*. Yesterday I received the September issue. Of the medicine, I have received nothing as yet. May there be people who have a call from Above for this glorious work; then I will hear about it.

Receive our hearty greetings and be commended unto the Lord.

Yours in His service,

G. Kuijt—Wolo, October 8, 1963 ◻

Additional Resources About Rev. Kuijt

Dear Reader,

A number of *Banner of Truth* issues from 1962–1966 contain letters and details about Rev. Kuijt’s missionary work. If you have not read these before, they are very interesting. To find them, go to <https://www.digibron.nl/> and use the search field to search for the word “mission.” Narrow the results using the filters on the left side of the page. Set the filter Bron = The Banner of Truth; Jaar = 1962 or 1963, etc.

Please note:

- Rev. Kuijt’s name was sometimes spelled Kuyt.
- More updates from Rev. Kuijt were published throughout the years, especially in 1979. To see these, you can search for the word “Kuijt” and browse through the results from the later years.
- If you want to see the page in English, use your browser’s translate option: right click any blank/white part of the page and find a “Translate to English” option. As you may have guessed “Bron” means “Source” and “Jaar” means “Year.”



Questions & Answers

Questions from Our Readers

Rev. H. Hofman, Beckwith, Grand Rapids, MI

Sometime ago I received a rather lengthy question with several other questions resulting from it. I will first mention the main question followed by questions related to it.

Why in some (Canadian) churches do men stand up during prayer while others stay seated?

- ***Taking into account the length of silent prayer, can we really pray while trying to be conscious of when to stop because the minister or elder is commencing the service?***
- ***Are we instructing our sons to stand up only because the minister told them to do so? There seem to be inconsistencies concerning this custom, and is it true that men standing up demonstrate biblical gender distinction in public worship?***
- ***Does this not become a show like the Pharisees who were praying in public?***
- ***What about when little children bob up and down copying their father, making others laugh?***

This question obviously came from one of our Canadian readers because I don’t know of any churches in the U.S. where men stand up during silent or public prayer. In all fairness to those who submitted these questions: they in no way meant it as being purposely critical, but simply asked for some biblical and practical guidance.

As far as biblical guidance, I have written about the subject of public prayer in the past and—even though the question at the time was somewhat different—I will first simply repeat what I wrote at that time.

“The difficulty of this question is that Scripture itself shows several forms which we do not observe either. Think of the *lifting up of the hands* (Psalm 141:2 & 143:6), prostration (Joshua 7:6), and Christ’s prayer in John 17:1, where we read, “...and lifted up His eyes to heaven...” This indicates the eyes open, while we teach our children to close their eyes. To answer your question more directly, I assume your concern is more the element of reverence vs. what is scripturally permissible. The answer is simple: utmost reverence in whatever physical gesture is observed is biblically commanded. If a minister or elder is unstable on his feet, or has balance issues, I see no problem if he holds on to the lectern with both hands. If he were to lose his balance and fall, it would cause more distraction. Folded arms seem extreme, and I agree that this posture does not convey what we would expect in terms of reverence. Let us stay as much as possible with folded hands and closed eyes, for young and old. Prayer is too holy a matter to be taken lightly, and if we would all practice closing our eyes and folding our hands in our homes, schools, and churches, as we have been taught, we will not be distracted by what others do.”

On a sidenote, it is also very interesting to read what, for example, our forefathers Brakel and Comrie wrote about many other elements of (public) prayer. I admit, they did not shun addressing the voice, the content, and similar issues in public prayer. Brakel mentions concerning physical gestures that they “do not attribute worthiness and fortitude to prayer.” Saints have prayed in various bodily postures, that is, being prostrate, sitting, standing, and kneeling. As such, I consider the sitting or standing during silent prayer to fall under the previous explanation as outlined above.

With respect to a posture being “Pharisaical” I would be careful to say or judge it this way. This lies first and foremost for the account of him who prays, and it is between him and the Lord who alone knows the heart. God’s people will readily agree that even (or especially!) their most holy works stand in need of the cleansing power of the blood of Christ. If we have an impression of that in our heart, I have enough to be concerned about and do not have time left to judge the posture in prayers of others.

Now, with respect to whether a Dutch custom must be carried over to our Canadian churches or even our denomination as a whole, I fully realize that in standing up, this may be an historical custom and a visible sign of the man being the head of the wife, the priest in the family and the

head of the household. I personally don’t disagree with this at all. However, both to *introduce* as well as to *abolish* customs has often led to unrest, confusion, hot heads and cold hearts. Therefore, I would advise letting this matter rest unless there is a unified desire or request for it. If we made a list of custom differences between our Dutch churches and North America and even between the churches in America and Canada, there would be more examples, some of which for a time were taken over while others for a time wore off or were abolished. We simply cannot let these matters become a wedge or divisive issue in the congregations, certainly not in light of what is stated above. As consistory, I certainly would be careful not to demand all male members of the congregation to stand for the sake of it merely being a Dutch custom, which moreover is not consistently practiced in the Netherlands either. Perhaps the best solution is to leave this matter to the individual conscience as Paul outlines in 1 Corinthians 8, 9, and 10. Let us be careful to always discern between what is essential and what is time-bound or custom related. ◻

Send your questions to: Rev. H. Hofman, 2339 Deer Trail Dr. NE, Grand Rapids, MI 49505, or hofman@premieronline.net.

Some Means in Preserving Confidence of Faith

What are the best means of preserving a Christian’s confidence of his interest in the covenant; and of recovering it, when it may be in any measure lost?...

To preserve the confidence of faith, it is further necessary that the people of God become intimately acquainted with Him, “Acquaint now thyself with Him, and be at peace” (Job 22:21). We must meditate much upon the divine perfections, especially those which are displayed in the Covenant of Grace. We must acquaint ourselves with Him by keeping up a constant intercourse with Him by the exercise of faith, by earnest prayer, by freely consulting with Him, and by speaking of Him to others. In short, we acquaint ourselves with God by conversing with Him in secret, and by praising Him in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs. By such an intercourse with Him we shall obtain the character given to Noah in Genesis 6 that he “walked with God.” Then we may expect that, according to His gracious Word, He will reveal His secret to us; that when we cast our burdens upon Him, He will sustain us, and that He will give us the desires of our heart.

In order to maintain a well-grounded confidence respecting our covenant relation to God, we must be *circumspect* in our conduct as it respects our neighbor and ourselves as well as God. For, when we become unwatchful over ourselves, neglect our duty towards our neighbor, or indulge in any sin, we may expect that God will have a *controversy with us*, and *hide His face from us*. We shall then sit in darkness, and be unable to approach with boldness to the throne of grace. Thus we shall be taught by sad experience that a God of spotless purity will be served in a holy manner, and that “it is an evil thing and bitter” to sin against Him....

Would we preserve our confidence toward God, we must be *clothed with humility*. The consideration of the august and awful majesty of God should excite in us the most profound reverence, and a sense of our meanness should lead us to appear before Him with the deepest abasement and lowness of mind. Whilst nothing is more offensive than pride, nothing is more pleasing to Him than humility. Therefore, it is that He “resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble” (James 4:6)....

—Excerpts taken from The Pious Communicant
Rev. Petrus Immens



Reflections

Evening Twilight (12)

Rev. P. Blok (1920-2019)

(Translated from the book *Avondschemering* [*Evening Twilight*])

The Crying of the Children of Israel

“And the LORD said, I have surely seen the affliction of My people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows”
(Exodus 3:7).

The life of God’s children can be like a readable letter. “Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men: Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart.” In such letters we read the wonder of the quickening work of the Holy Spirit and the bestowed and rightful part in Christ’s purchased benefits.

Their portion is not equal to those who establish their portion themselves or to that which has been imposed and urged on them by others. Such an established part flows from natural privileges and a general knowledge of the truth. During Jesus’ sojourn on earth, these revealed themselves as the greatest enemies of free grace.

The life of the true subjects is like an open book, written by the Holy Spirit and revealed in the hearts. Paul wrote of this, “Written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart.”

Yet, there are also still closed books in God’s kingdom. Although the principles of a new life are found, and the characteristics of an implanted faith are experienced, they live a hidden life. It is similar to the seed entrusted to the field. The seed has germinated, but the first sprouts of life are still hidden in the earth.

We remember a story from our childhood. A group of children were walking through the polder in the spring. The fields had been sown. They saw a farmer in the field. He was kneeling, and with his fingers he was carefully digging into the earth. What was that man doing there? It was a question they could not answer. Back home, one of the children asked his mother what that farmer was doing there. The mother had a hidden life with God, and a lesson was learned through this question. She said, “My child, this man was examining to know if his field were alive. This is done on one’s knees and is a precise work. It is very necessary to examine whether our field has been sown and whether the seed has germinated.”

The redemption of the people of Israel from Egypt teaches us the wonderful dealings of God with His Church. Of this we read, “And the LORD said, I have surely seen the affliction of My people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry

by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows.”

The eternal covenant God, the God of the burning bush, revealed to Moses the message of deliverance according to the covenant decree to a covenant people. What were the circumstances of the people? They were oppressed. Their cries had ascended to the throne of God. Their slave drivers were urging them, and their soul-afflictions were taking away all joy and expectation of life.

Life in the brickkiln was a constant affliction. The pressure became heavier and heavier; the demands of the slave drivers could not be met. There was no possibility of delivering themselves. Only a miracle of deliverance could provide relief. The people cried out for deliverance, and their cries had risen to their covenant God. The Lord called the oppressed “His people.”

Visiting one of our friends, a closed book was opened. He was sick and dejected. We asked him a question, “What kind of man are you before God?”

He opened his book of life: “I am like an Israelite in the brickkiln. Every evening the labor of the day is examined. The slave-driver demands more and more, and every night I have to hear, ‘It is lacking, it is lacking.’ Then I feel the whip pass over my back. The wounds hurt and the demand remains, and I cry out to the living God. I do not know how to go on.”

We read with him the third chapter of Exodus. “And I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians.” The Lord gave testimony to that; his soul was taught about the way of redemption and the act of redemption. It gave room and pointed to the possibility of redemption from God.

A few weeks later, salvation came but not in the way we expected. One morning the Lord took him away from this valley of tears. He was only fifty-one years old, but for God he was old enough. It was unexpected to us but not outside of God’s counsel. The Lord gave testimony to His own work. After all, He crowns His own work. In the funeral service words were spoken about Hebrews 12:1&2 “Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.”

A closed book was opened. God’s leadings were pointed out. God’s deeds were admired. Of these wonders the poet sang:

*When God His chosen people led,
The kings and armies turned and fled;
The hosts of God victorious fought,
And home their spoils and trophies brought.*

*God's people rested, free from care,
In glorious peace and beauty fair;
Their mighty King did overthrow
The hostile kings like driven snow.*

—Psalter 180:4&5 ◻

(To be continued)



Current Events

Concerns in Indonesia

In Indonesia, residents often reject establishment of new churches. An Indonesian organization is calling such rejections a violation of every citizen's constitutional rights. The executive director of the SETARA Institute for Democracy and Peace, an Indonesian organization that promotes democracy and human rights, recently noted that communities are increasingly rejecting new churches. "Every rejection is a violation of the constitutional rights of every citizen," he recently said. "Our constitution...guarantees individuals the right to embrace religion and worship." According to regulations, at least sixty residents of the village where a new church is being established must approve a new church. These churches also must have at least ninety worshippers. The most common reasons why Indonesians are rejecting new churches and other minority religion houses of worship are intolerance and majoritarianism. The institute's records show religious freedom violations in Indonesia are increasing.

—Persecution.org

Christian Abducted in Pakistan Returned

A court in Pakistan returned custody of a sixteen-year-old Christian girl to her parents in October after a Muslim had kidnapped, forcibly converted, and married her. She and her family are members of a local Brethren church. The judge granted the petition for recovery of custody after he recognized that the girl's statement that she had converted and married of her own free will had been made under duress. She was abducted from her home on September 12 by a local man and his accomplices. She was targeted because of his hatred against the Christian community. It was clear that she was suffering from abuse and violence at the hands of her abductors.... The judge noticed her fear and anxiety and ordered all persons present to vacate the courtroom so that the girl could freely record her statement. Once she felt secure, she told the court that she had been converted and married against her will and wished to return to her parents' house. Hearing this, the court handed her custody to her parents. Police escorted her and her parents from the court because of fears that the suspect and his relatives would attack them.

—ChurchInChains.ie

More Sanctions to Help Myanmar

Government officials in the United Kingdom, the European Union, and Canada announced a set of coordinated sanctions against Myanmar's military in October. This latest round of sanctions aims to restrict the military's ability to conduct airstrikes against the country's civilian population by limiting suppliers of aviation fuel and equipment to the military. These airstrikes on civilians are gross human rights violations. Previous sanctions have left loopholes taken advantage of by the military and its supporters in China, Russia, and elsewhere. Still, the latest sanctions come at a crucial juncture in the struggle between the military and pro-democracy forces in the country. While the military's war

against the country's ethnoreligious minorities stretches back decades, the military conducted more airstrikes in August than in any previous month on record, making sanctions on its aviation sector especially timely. Myanmar, by a great percentage, is Buddhist, but the communities that make up the remainder are well-established, well-organized, and, for the most part, predate the formation of the modern state by centuries. A good percentage of some states are Christian while in other states the majority are Muslim. This overlap of ethnic and religious identity has created a volatile situation for non-Buddhists across the country. The military is suffering from a series of battlefield setbacks as a coalition of ethnoreligious minorities from around the country have launched coordinated offensives against key military strongholds. Experts believe that Myanmar's military is atrophying rapidly through casualties or desertions.

—Persecution.org

New U.S. Ambassador to Israel

President-elect Donald Trump named Mike Huckabee as his ambassador to Israel, picking an evangelical Christian who favors Jewish sovereignty in parts of the West Bank. Trump said, "Mike has been a great public servant, governor, and leader in faith for many years. He loves Israel, and the people of Israel, and likewise, the people of Israel love him. Mike will work tirelessly to bring about peace in the Middle East!" Huckabee is a supporter of settlement expansion in the West Bank, although former Trump administration officials have reportedly warned that the incoming president may not support this.

—JTA.org

No Book Ban in New Jersey

A bill aimed at limiting book bans in public schools and libraries and protecting librarians from lawsuits and criminal charges has passed N.J. Congress and is now on the governor's desk. Titled the "Freedom to Read Act," the legislation would require the state's education commissioner to develop policies on how library materials are selected and how challenges to books on library shelves should be evaluated. Local school boards and library boards would then adopt their own policies using this model. "You and all New Jerseyans have the freedom to choose what you want to read, and parents have and will continue to have the freedom to choose what their children will read, but no one gets to decide that for you—not now, and not ever," said the bill sponsor. There was heavy opposition from Republicans. GOP lawmakers said they feared the law would allow children to access obscene materials and protect librarians who share obscene books with children. "Putting our children at risk and potentially exposing them to material that they are not prepared for flies in the face of our protective duty," said a Republican senator. He went on to say that hiding obscene and pornographic material under the guise of the First Amendment is a very distortion of who we are and what we strive to be as Americans.

—NewJerseyMonitor.com



Timothy FOR THE YOUNG

The Life of Rev. G.H. Kersten as Told to His Grandchildren (?)

(Adapted from the book *Religious Stories for Young and Old, Volume IV*)

Saved from a concentration camp (continued)

"The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much" (James 5:16b).

"Come right in," Marie said, "I knew you were coming. Therefore, I left the front door open. Come in and follow me."

Astonished, I followed her to the kitchen. There we sat as if we had known each other for years. Then she began to speak of the ways the Lord held with her. Oh, what a precious afternoon we had! I may believe that the Lord was in our midst. Then I told her my problem: that I sought a place to stay during the nights away from the Germans, upon the burgo-master's advice.

"Oh," she said, "that can easily be arranged. Do you mind sleeping on the porch? We can leave the door open so that you can come in any time you want."

I did not know how to show my appreciation. I only said, "Thank you, Marie!"

The following evening, I went to Marie and John's farm after dark. Another surprise awaited me. You know everything in the line of food was rationed during the war, also milk. What did I see on the little table next to my bed? A huge jug full of milk and a tumbler. Was I ever pleasantly surprised! Every evening a full jug of milk was there!

After a week, however, I did not see the milk jug. Maybe they forgot, I thought. The next evening again and the following nights...there was no milk. "That is no oversight," I said to myself but what could I say? I had no rights.

Then, unexpectedly, after about two weeks, the milk jug with milk appeared on my table again. I did not know what to think but appreciated it greatly.

In October, 1943, when we came home from visiting friends, we found our house occupied by the Germans so that we moved to Rotterdam without being able to say good-bye to Marie and John.

After the war, I went to see Marie. She told me that John had died in an accident. "I must tell you something," she began. She was pleased with the peace the

Lord had given, but she said: "The Lord's judgments have been postponed, not taken away!" I often think of these words. How true this has become, when we see the situation the whole world is in! Wars and rumors of war, rebellion and revolutions, etc. abound.

Marie then asked me, "Did you notice when you slept on our porch that your milk was withheld from you for some weeks?"

"Definitely, I did."

"I'll tell you why. My late brother John did not agree with the idea of giving you milk every night. After a week he was determined in his refusal to give you the jug of milk, but what happened? The very first day after he refused you the milk, when he went to collect the eggs, he found three dead chickens. How strange, he thought! Why? Was something in the feed? No, then all the chickens would have died or, at least, been sick."

The next day, when he went to collect the eggs, he found two more chickens dead. "John came to me," Marie went on, "and in an angry tone said, 'Some more chickens are dead this morning. I wonder what is wrong, I can't understand it.'"

Hesitantly, Marie answered, "I think I know the reason. I am afraid it is because you refused the milk to our friend."

"Don't talk nonsense, Marie. You say that because you want him to have the milk in the worst way, but don't you realize that we can sell this milk for a good price or make butter from it?"

Marie did not argue with her brother. The next day, John went after the eggs again. Now he was really disgusted; some more hens lay dead in the chicken coop. He went to Marie and said, "Now I don't know any more what is the matter with the chickens. There are some dead ones every day. This morning again!"

"John," Marie answered, "don't be stubborn; give the man his milk. If you don't, you'll lose all your chickens."

"I don't believe there is any connection between the milk and the chickens. I'll see once more."

The next day it was the same story; four more chickens dead. In a rage he went to Marie to tell her the bad news.

“If you don’t give in, John, you’ll have no chickens left.” “That same evening,” Marie continued, “John filled your milk jug again and put it on your table.”

The next day John said, “Marie, now I am going to find out whether you are right or not.” Hurriedly he came in the house calling, “Marie, Marie, no dead chickens today.” From that day on during the rest of your stay, not one chicken died.

Children, I was and still am astonished that the Lord showed me so many mercies upon the prayers of His people, but do you know what I lack? A true, thankful heart and the realization: “It is of the LORD’s mercies that we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not” (Lamentations 3:22).

Do you remember, children, the prayer your grandfather received for me when I had to go to the German concentration camp and how the Lord gave deliverance? Well, then, Marie told me the following:

“When I read in the newspaper that the whole army had to go to the German concentration camps, the Lord gave me a prayer for you.” She sighed: “Lord, I have read that our army must go to the concentration camps. Lord, there lives here in town a son of one of Thy servants; must he go, too?” The Lord was pleased to answer her prayer by giving her the words out of Psalm 42 (Psalter 117:4): “God will surely send relief.” Then she said, “Thank Thee, Lord, that he does not have to go.”

So, she knew I would stay in the country. I told her that my father had received the same words!

Oh, children, how great are the wonders of the Lord! Upon the prayers of those who were taught to pray, the Lord can do great wonders. It was confirmed to me what it says in James 5:16b: “The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.”

A Terrible Deathbed

“It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God” (Hebrews 10:31).

Once your grandfather told us the following story. Among his catechumens there were a few boys who were misbehaving in the class, especially Jack who was hardened in his conscience and refused to listen to the lessons and admonitions. He was forced by his parents to attend church and catechism classes, but he never knew his questions and showed clearly that he was not interested in anything pertaining to the truth.

As long as he had no work, Jack depended upon his parents. Therefore, they were able to make him go to church and attend catechism classes. However, more than once he was so bold that he dared to say to his mother, “I wish I were old enough to find a job. Then I can be my own boss and don’t have to listen to you anymore...”

How he grieved his parents and especially his godly mother, but he did not care and turned a deaf ear to all their warnings.

(To be continued)



Bible Stories for Little Ones

David and Bathsheba

(Based on 2 Samuel 11&12)

Sometimes, when we hear the history of David, we are almost ready to think that he did nothing wrong. We remember how David killed Goliath and that he wrote many psalms. We know that he was called “the man after God’s own heart,” and that Jesus was called the “Son of David.” Was David perfect, then? Did he ever sin?

Yes, he did. As hard as it is to believe, David did wrong things, too.

Perhaps you have read biographies of famous people: Thomas Edison, George Washington, Alexander Graham Bell. Think about those books. How many

bad things did they relate about the person? Very few, if any! Many biographies are written to make the person appear as if he never did anything wrong.

The Bible is not like that; it tells us about the bad things which God’s people did as well as the good, so, today, when God’s people read that God forgave the sins of His people of old, they can believe there is yet hope for them.

Now we will learn about something very wicked that David did. We call this sin adultery. God forbids it in the seventh commandment. David suffered for the rest of his life because of this sin.

One evening David was walking on his roof. As he did, he could see over a wall and into the neighbor's courtyard. There he saw a woman who was washing herself. David should have turned his eyes away, but he didn't. No, instead he listened to Satan. David lost the battle against that temptation when he invited the woman into his house!

David had several wives, but he wanted this woman, too. He found out that her name was Bathsheba and that she was already married to a man named Uriah, so, of course, David couldn't marry her. However, a wicked thought entered his heart. What if her husband died? Then he could marry Bathsheba. Yes, he would ask his general to put Uriah in the front lines in the battle where he would surely be killed; then he could marry Bathsheba! What an awful plan this was: David was thinking not only of adultery but of murder, too! God was not pleased with him.

It wasn't too long before David's general sent a message that Uriah had indeed been killed in the battle. Now that Bathsheba's husband was no longer living, David could take her to be his wife. After Bathsheba had mourned for Uriah, David sent for her, and she and David were married. Soon there was a new baby coming.

One day the prophet Nathan came to David's palace. He had a message from God for David, but it was not an easy message to give to a king! If David became angry, he could have Nathan killed! Nathan would obey the Lord, and so he came to David's palace and stood before the king.

"King David," Nathan said, "there were two men in one city. One man was very rich. He had many sheep and cattle; anything money could buy, he could get. The other man was very poor. All he had was one little lamb, a pet lamb. He fed it the best foods he could, and it grew up with his children. Oh, how he loved this little lamb!

"Then something awful happened. One day the rich man had company, and he wanted to cook some meat for his guests. What did he do? Instead of taking one of the many sheep that he had, he took that poor man's lamb to cook for his visitors!"

David grew angry as he thought of what the rich man had done. "The man who did this must surely die!" he cried. "And not only that, but he should give that poor man four lambs to make up for the one he killed"

Then Nathan pointed right at David and said, "You are that man!"

What?! Was David the rich man? Whose lamb did he take? Then, as Nathan continued speaking, David knew.

"God made you king over all of Israel," Nathan told David. "He kept you safe from Saul. He gave you

many wives. He gave you everything, and He could have given you even more than that, but what did you do? You went after Uriah's wife, and he had only one wife! You stole Uriah's wife and then had him killed."

Nathan was not yet finished. "Because you did this," he told David, "the sword is never going to depart from your house. You took Bathsheba in secret, but God is going to punish you in front of all Israel. There will always be fighting and killing in your family."

Now David knew what an awful sin he had done against God. How sorry he was for his sin. Oh, if only he had never looked at Bathsheba! If only he had not listened to Satan. He said to Nathan, "I have sinned against the Lord."

"Since you are truly sorry for your sin, God will not put you to death," Nathan told David, "but Bathsheba's child is going to die."

Soon after, the baby became very sick. Oh, how David cried and prayed! He wouldn't eat, he wouldn't sleep. He just begged God to spare the baby's life.

A week later the baby died. The servants in his house thought, "How can we ever tell David that the baby died? Look at how upset he was when the baby was only sick. What will he be like now that the baby is dead?"

David heard them whispering, and he asked, "Has the baby died?"

They had to say, "Yes, he did."

What did David do? Did he cry and tear his clothes? No, he did something very different. He got up, took a bath, and changed his clothes. Then he went to the house of the Lord and worshipped. Afterward he returned home and asked for food, and he ate.

Then his men asked him, "Why is it that you wouldn't eat or drink when the baby was sick, but now that he is dead you don't act sad at all?"

David answered, "When the baby was sick, I prayed and fasted, hoping that God would yet be merciful to me and let the baby live. Now, he is dead. I can't bring him back again. He is in heaven where I yet hope to go one day."

What faith David had!

Before long God blessed Bathsheba by giving her another baby. His name was Solomon, the wise Solomon who would one day be king and build the temple of the Lord.

David wrote a song after his sin with Bathsheba. This is Psalm 51. The words of this psalm show what was in David's heart: "Have mercy upon me, O God, according to Thy lovingkindness...Against Thee, Thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in Thy sight... Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow."



Bible Quiz

Leaves

Dear Boys and Girls,

Jay and Austin listened attentively as the nature guide pointed out different trees and named them. Their bucket was already half-full with interesting items such as: acorns, pinecones, crab apples, a dead beetle, red maple leaves, and yellow hickory and ash leaves. The sunlight filtered through the beautiful canopy of leaves above them, creating a twinkling arch of yellow, red, and orange. A breeze rustled gently through the treetops, and a few brown leaves fluttered to the ground. The path was carpeted with leaves, and little chipmunks scurried through them, looking for scattered nuts.

Jay raised his hand. "What makes the leaves turn colors?" he asked, holding up a green leaf with red edges.

The guide nodded. "That's a great question," he said. "The trees are getting ready for winter. They stop making food, there is less sunlight, and so there is less chlorophyll, which is what makes leaves green."

The guide pointed to the bright blue sky. "Length of day, temperature, and weather all play a role in the way leaves change color. Days become shorter, the temperature cooler...and if the weather is warm and sunny in the fall, the colors of the trees will be very bright."

Boys and girls, did you notice the beautiful leaves this autumn? When the leaves fall, we are reminded that, just as they wither and fall, we will all one day have to die. However, there is another lesson to be seen in the colored leaves, BEFORE they fall from the trees.

The leaves grew and flourished all spring and summer, but they aged, and then their appearance began to change. We age, too. We become taller, stronger, but eventually, as the years go by, a person then begins to show more signs of age—a few "tired marks" appear—wrinkles, creases, weathered hands, graying hair...Just like the changing leaves...

One of the factors contributing to the changing color of leaves is the length of the day. In the fall, days become shorter and shorter. It is usually this way in life, too. When a person becomes older, each day seems to go faster. There is so much to do and so little time to do it. So many days have already passed, and how many are left? The length of our life seems to become shorter and shorter and go by faster and faster.

Another factor contributing to the changing color of leaves is the weather. In our life, many difficult things can come upon our path. Sometimes these events are called storms in life. Sometimes they are called trials. In life, there will be beautiful days—for example, when babies are born—and winter days—days when one feels sad or gloomy. Like the hot sunny days and cloudy, windy days, there will be challenges and difficulties. The weather patterns go on, and sometimes the difficulties make a person age faster.

A third factor contributing to the changing color of leaves is the temperature. The temperature in autumn becomes cooler. In the same way, as a person becomes older, he often grows colder. His heart is not touched or frightened anymore by the warnings of a coming end. His heart used to feel warm with a desire to be converted but now does not feel this anymore. The more often he has heard the callings to seek the Lord and has not done so, the colder he becomes.

Older...faster...stormier...colder...Life does not stop. That is why it is so important to seek the Lord in your youth before life seems to go so fast and be so busy and our heart so cold and indifferent. One day, that colorful leaf will fall. One day, our life will come to an end. Will you be prepared?

* * * * *

Complete the crossword puzzle on the next page.

Across

3. But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our _____, like the wind, have taken us away (Isaiah 64).

5. Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When her branch is yet tender, and putteth _____ leaves, ye know that summer is near (Mark 13).

8. He cried aloud, and said thus, Hew down the tree, and cut off his _____, shake off his leaves, and scatter his fruit: let the beasts get away from under it, and the fowls from his branches: (Daniel 4).

9. And the sound of a shaken leaf shall chase them; and they shall flee, as fleeing from a _____; and they shall fall when none pursueth (Leviticus 26).

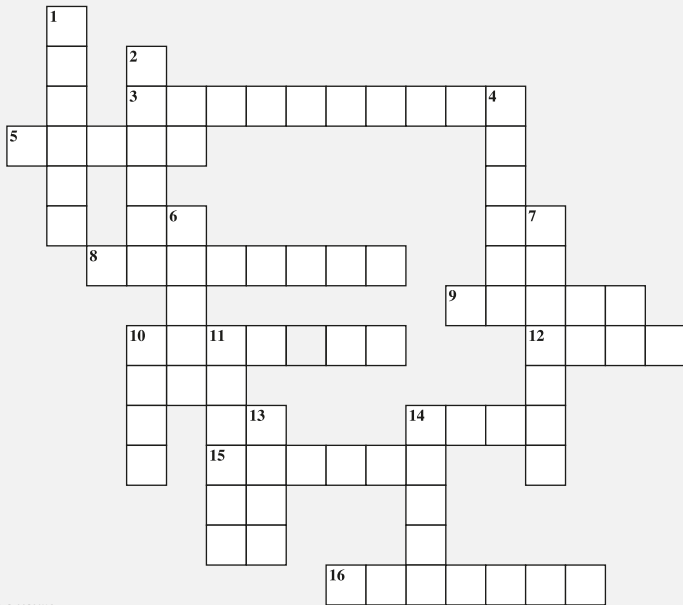
10. And the leaves of the tree were for the _____ of the nations (Revelation 22).

12. As a teil tree, and as an oak, whose substance is in them, when they cast their leaves: so the holy _____ shall be the substance thereof (Isaiah 6).

14. I will surely consume them, saith the LORD: there shall be no grapes on the vine, nor figs on the fig tree, and the leaf shall _____; (Jeremiah 8).

15. Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When his branch is yet _____, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh: (Matthew 24).

16. And seeing a fig tree afar off having leaves, he came, if haply he might find any thing thereon: and when he came to it, he found _____ but leaves; for the time of figs was not yet (Mark 11).



Down

1. And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves _____ (Genesis 3).

2. Say thou, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Shall it prosper? shall he not pull up the roots thereof, and cut off the fruit thereof, that it wither? it shall _____ in all the leaves of her spring, (Ezekiel 17).

4. The leaves thereof were fair, and the fruit thereof much, and in it was meat for all: the beasts of the field had _____ under it, and the fowls of the heaven dwelt in the boughs thereof, (Daniel 4).

6. For ye shall be as an oak whose leaf fadeth, and as a garden that hath no _____ (Isaiah 1).

7. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall _____ (Psalm 1).

10. And all the host of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll: and all their _____ shall fall down, as the leaf falleth off from the vine, (Isaiah 34).

11. And the dove came in to him in the evening; and, lo, in her mouth was an olive leaf pluckt off: so

Noah knew that the waters were _____ from off the earth (Genesis 8).

13. For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when _____ cometh, but her leaf shall be green; (Jeremiah 17).

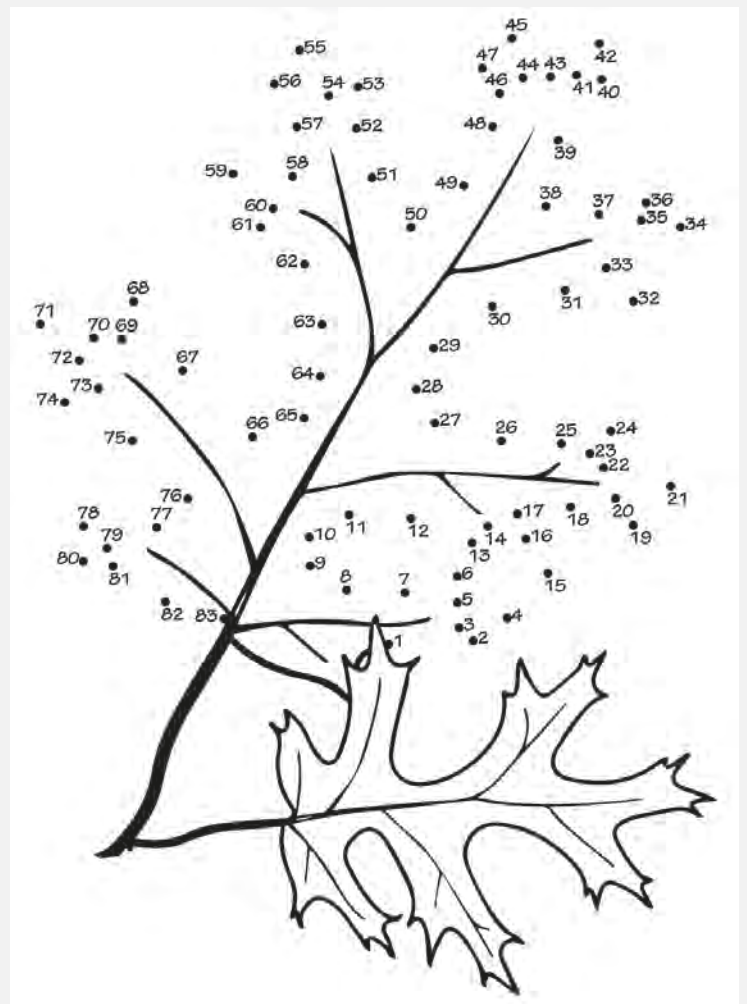
14. And by the river upon the bank thereof, on this side and on that side, shall grow all trees for meat, whose leaf shall not fade, neither shall the _____ thereof be consumed: (Ezekiel 47).

For the Older Children

15. Which verse in Isaiah 40 speaks of the process of nature in autumn time? _____

For the Younger Children

Connect the dots and then color the picture.



Answers to November's "Burial" quiz:

- | | |
|--------------|------------------|
| 1. Graves | John 5:28 |
| 2. Hope | Isaiah 38:18 |
| 3. Birth | Ecclesiastes 6:3 |
| 4. Evildoers | Isaiah 14:20 |
| 5. Gates | Jeremiah 22:19 |
| 6. Poured | Matthew 26:12 |

- 7. Burying Mark 14:8
- 8. Kept John 12:7
- 9. House 1 Kings 14:13
- 10. The man of God 1 Kings 13:29
- 11. Stephen Acts 8:2
- 12. Lazarus John 11:38
- 13. Jacob Genesis 37:35
- 14. Uzziah 2 Chronicles 26:23
- 15. Jesus John 19:40
- 16. Elisha 2 Kings 13:21
- 17. Young man Luke 7:14
- 18. Abner 2 Samuel 3:31
- 19. a. an hundred and seven and twenty years old
b. Kirjatharba c. Abraham

Answers to previous quizzes were received in October from:

- | | | |
|--------------------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| Britni Blom (2) | Ethan Driesen (2) | Lauren Remijn (2) |
| Christina Blom | Jordan Driesse | Kenzie Romeyn |
| GaryJon Blom (2) | Kailyn Driesse | Shaelyn Romeyn |
| Jairus Blom (2) | Lindsey Driesse | Collin Rozeboom |
| Jenina Blom | Allison Ekema | Grace Timmermans |
| Joseph Blom (2) | Kaylynn Ekema | Caleb Van Koeveringe |
| Lawrence Blom | Ronna Geuze (2) | Lucas Van Koeveringe |
| Martena Blom (2) | Abe Mol | Kiela Van Ravenswaay (3) |
| Martha Blom | Teddy Mol | Winston Van Ravenswaay (3) |
| Tiffany Blom (2) | Madeline Mol | Joelle Vande Waerdt (2) |
| Willem Blom (2) | Zachary Mol | Wyatt Vande Waerdt (2) |
| Aryanna Breeweg | John Murphy | Helen Verhoef |
| Carly Brouwer | Andrew Murphy | Shara Verhoef |
| Thomas Brouwer | Blake Pannekoek | Keegan Weeda |
| Maya Chase (2) | Lauren Pannekoek | Jayden Weeda |
| Oakley Chase (2) | Andrew Remijn (2) | Nathan Wesdyk |
| Emilee DeVries (2) | Daniel Remijn (2) | No Name |
| Cody Driesen (2) | | |

Please send your answers to the address shown below:

Aunt LenaBeth
180 Jacobs Road, Newfoundland, NJ 07435
E-mail: auntlenabeth@gmail.com

Welcome to our new members:
Kiela Van Ravenswaay, Jordan Driesse

Love,
Aunt LenaBeth



News & Announcements

Ministerial Calls

Extended:

To Rev. E. Hakvoort of Norwich, Ontario, by the congregation of Sunnyside, Washington.

Declined:

By Rev. E. Hakvoort of Norwich, Ontario, to the congregation of Sunnyside, Washington.

By Rev. M.H. Schot of Hendrik-Ido-Ambacht, the Netherlands, to the congregation of Chilliwack, British Columbia.

By Rev. J.J. Witvoet of Rock Valley, Iowa, to the congregation of Nobleford, Alberta.

Obituaries

HEIKOOP, Willem Jan – Age 90, October 6, 2024; Norwich, Ontario; Wife – Elizabeth (deceased, nee Macpherson); Children –

Martin & Arlene, Mairi Wagenaar, Will & Jane, John & Jo-Anne; 29 grandchildren, 55 great-grandchildren; Son-in-law – Marty Wagenaar (Kathy); predeceased by infant daughter Isabella, daughter Johanne Wagenaar, and son-in-law Ron. (Rev. E. Hakvoort, Psalm 73:24.)

VANDE STOUWE, Gertrude (nee Van Ginkel) – Age 91, October 10, 2024; Rock Valley, Iowa; Husband – William (“Bill,” deceased); Children – Randy & Carol, Nancy & Mark Van Otterloo, Todd & Kelley, Cheryl & Rob Driesen, Myra & Dale Zomer; 16 grandchildren, 9 great-grandchildren; Siblings – John & Jeanette Van Ginkel; In-laws – John Van Beek Jr., Gerrit & Lois, Clarence & Faye Vande Stouwe; predeceased by a brother, 2 sisters, and several in-laws. (Rev. J.J. Witvoet, Psalm 26:11.)

In Memoriam

Mr. Willem Jan Heikoop

On October 6, 2024, Mr. W.J. Heikoop passed away at the age of ninety years. Originally from the Netherlands, he emigrated to New Zealand and there he married. Later he moved with his family to St. Catharines. During the time that followed, he served our congregation as elder for about twenty-five years during two separate periods. May those labors still be blessed. The latter portion of his life he spent in Norwich, the last while in the Bethany Care Home. May the Lord remember the family in mercy and sanctify this calling.

— The St. Catharines NRC Consistory

WISSE, Gertrude (nee Vander Waal) – Age 92, October 30, 2024; Rock Valley, Iowa; Husband – Leendert (“Leen,” deceased); Children – Samuel & Sue, Tonia Van Voorst, Arthur, Janene & Jim Van Voorst, Lynda & Harold Rus; 17 grandchildren, 17 great-grandchildren; Siblings – Marie & Lourens Willekes, Hendrik Vander Waal, Walter & Sheryl Vander Waal; Sisters-in-law – Elizabeth Vander Waal, Betty Ann Vander Waal, Alena Vander Sluijs; predeceased by son John Leonard, son-in-law Terry Van Voorst, 4 brothers, and several in-laws. (Rev. J.J. Witvoet, 2 Samuel 12:13.)

■ Summary of Installation Service of Rev. E. Maljaars

Rev. E. Hakvoort officiated the installation service on September 25, 2024. His text for the special occasion was from Isaiah 62:6: *“I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, which shall never hold their peace day nor night: ye that make mention of the LORD, keep not silence.”*

Theme: A Message from Heaven—

- 1) A message for the congregation;
- 2) A message for the minister.

A message for the congregation

Isaiah sees Israel prophetically in exile, having turned away from God. Nevertheless, God sends His servants, but Israel stops their ears. They were too comfortable in Babylon. If the Lord had dealt with them according to their sins, they would have been destroyed. However, by God’s free and sovereign grace, there was a remnant who had learned that it was their own fault. Thus, it also is with God’s people; they learn it is their own fault, and that goes all the way back to Paradise. It becomes an eternal wonder that the Lord still calls. May it please Him to also use Rev. E. Maljaars as an instrument in His hand. The foundation of salvation is in Him who has said, “I have...” It is the LORD who speaks, the covenant-keeping God. It is all of grace. He has set watchmen. He applies the call, and so a message comes to Jerusalem—the image of an outward congregation.

A message of well and woe; a proclamation of death in Adam and life in Christ is extended to all the hearers. The precious are separated from the vile. The nameless ones, and those who see no hope in themselves are called, too. No, the message does not flatter. It does not make man lazy. The messenger, a servant of God, not of men, is called to deal honestly. May the congregation bear the messenger on the wings of prayer.

A message for the minister

The minister is a watchman. Paul also saw looming dangers from within and without and so warned the Ephesians. Ministers are to watch for those dangers that threaten the flock. Ministers, as sons of men—not better or worthier than their own members—are called to lift up their voices. They stand between heaven and earth, the Word of God between them and the congregation. They are not to hold their peace but to give a clear

sound of the message of law and gospel. They are not to speak vaguely nor whisper part of the counsel of God. Rather, they are called to clearly speak the whole counsel of God. They are called to plainly indicate that true spiritual life does not begin with Christ but that room has to be made for Him. The watchmen on the walls are to speak of the wonderful works of the Triune God, that room may be made, in a right way, for the Lord in the heart. May the Lord’s people hear their name and sinners be converted by free and sovereign grace. The congregation was again encouraged to bear their minister on the wings of prayer.

After the reading of the form, and upon being asked the corresponding questions, Rev. E. Maljaars answered, “Yes, truly with all my heart.” Rev. Hakvoort then spoke some personal words to Rev. Maljaars, his family, and the Courtland congregation and welcomed Rev. Maljaars into the Classis East. After this the congregation stood and sang Psalter 150:3.

■ Summary of Inaugural Sermon by Rev. E. Maljaars

Beloved, we read of a beautiful prophecy of the Messiah in Isaiah 43:20b: *“Because I give waters in the wilderness, [and] rivers in the desert, to give drink to My people, My chosen.”* We see this prophecy also fulfilled in the history of John 4, from which Rev. E. Maljaars preached. He took John 4:4 as his text for the inaugural sermon. *“He must needs go through Samaria.”* Theme: The necessity of Jesus Christ’s presence in Samaria.

1) **The necessity of the gospel:** Jesus, who gives chosen ones living water, came to Sychar to meet that woman at Jacob’s well. He proclaims the gospel to her (John 4:10). Living water is the grace of God. Jesus Christ is the gift. In God’s providence they are at the well together while the disciples are away. She must hear, to be made alive. The task of God’s ambassadors is also to speak about the Gift of God and the Water of Life. “Woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel!” Jesus proclaims the gospel to her. She hears the message with her ears but does not understand it. Although He instructs her, she still focuses on natural water. She has a need as a natural sinner, but she is blind to the Gift of God. However, for God’s people, He is the way. He becomes everything. What about you? That way is still open; that living water is still offered. Jesus Christ paid the price by His death on the cross to satisfy the justice of God. Christ says, “Drink abundantly.” Yet, the natural man only thirsts for the things of the world.

2) **The necessity of the law:** When there is no need, there is no thirst. There is no need to be delivered. However, Jesus is the almighty Saviour. He can make dead sinners thirst. How does he make them thirsty? In this passage He uses the Law to convict her of her sin. *“Go, call thy husband, and come hither.”* She becomes honest. The Law becomes the schoolmaster to bring her to know Christ. He

came to fulfill the Law. He can cover sinners—who learn that their righteousnesses are filthy rags—with His robe of righteousness. The members of Courtland need to experience the same.

3) The necessity of true worship:

The woman speaks about where she should worship, but it is not about where; it is about how. Jesus is clear when He indicates that it must be in spirit and in truth and according to His Word and will. True worship begins in this life and will be the eternal, uninterrupted joy in heaven of all God’s people. Courtland, faithfully use the means the Lord gives. Who is a God like unto Him? We need to be taught by Him! She becomes guilty in her whole life and as a guilty sinner begins to speak about the Messiah (John 4:25). Although the Messiah stands before her, she only sees Him as a prophet. He must be revealed.

4) The necessity of a revelation:

How necessary and precious when He reveals Himself. *“I that speak unto thee am He.”* When the Word is opened, and the One who saves is revealed, He becomes precious. Have you seen Him? Blessed are they that thirst, for they shall see God. They shall see Him with the eye of faith, for example, as *“the LORD our Righteousness.”* We need Him to be revealed. This is the work of the Holy Spirit (John 16:14). Congregation, we need that Lamb of God and the Spirit. You cannot just know about it; it must be experienced; you must know Him. This woman was given a small taste of who He is!

5) **The necessity of evangelism:** This woman’s heart is overflowing. She wants others to hear. She becomes a missionary, and she goes back into the city. She wants to tell others about Him. *“Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?”* If you are made thirsty, and you receive a taste of that precious Mediator, you will want to receive more, and you will want others to learn of Him. God’s children, you are blessed to be a blessing.

After personally addressing the congregation, Rev. E.C. Adams addressed Rev. Maljaars on behalf of the North American General Mission and Classis Far West. Rev. J.J. Witvoet also addressed Rev. Maljaars on behalf of Classis Midwest. Each extended his best wishes, and a desire for the Lord’s richest blessing. Elder E. Korevaar, on behalf of the Courtland congregation, also welcomed Rev. Maljaars and his family to Courtland.

■ Post-High School Young Adults’ Winter Conference

January 2-4, 2025

The Timothy Youth Group of Franklin Lakes & Clifton, New Jersey, is planning the annual Winter Conference for January 2-4, 2025. All post-high school young adults are invited. For more information and to sign up, please visit www.timothygroupnrc.org (password: January2025). The deadline to sign up is December 7, 2024.

Dear reader, the need is great. If you have an education background, please take a moment to consider the many positions available across our congregations.

■ Administrators/Managers

EBEN-EZER CHRISTIAN SCHOOL, ST. CATHARINES, ONTARIO, is inviting applications to fill a full-time secondary teacher/administrator role. We would be gladdened by inquiries and applications of individuals who are qualified, versatile, and dedicated but who also love the doctrine according to godliness. For more information about this position, please contact the principal, Mr. Arthur Verhoef at 905-563-3077 or principal@ecs.school.ca. Please send applications to the secretary of the school board, Mr. G. Brouwer, 1372 Gregory Road N., St. Catharines, Ontario, L2R 6P9 or call 647-271-8984, or email gerry@ecs.school.ca

NETHERLANDS REFORMED CHRISTIAN SCHOOL, POMPTON PLAINS, NEW JERSEY. The school administrator will strive to direct the school according to the Word of God, the Three Forms of Unity, the Constitution of the Netherlands Reformed Christian School, the policies of the NRC School Board, and the regulations of the New Jersey Department of Education. The primary duty of the administrator is to maintain productive relations with the school board, students, faculty and staff, parents and community.

Relocation expenses and financial incentives will be discussed upon inquiry. For more information or to apply, please contact Tom Van Vugt (education chairman) at 973-703-1511 or email tomv@plainviewgrowers.com, or John Van Der Brink (administrator) at 973-628-7400 or email nrcea_office@nrceasnj.org

To All Candidates for Education Positions

Please visit advertising.nrcea.education for an up-to-date listing of job openings in NRCEA schools as well as links to the school websites for more information about the positions and the schools. When accessing the job bank on the NRCEA SharePoint, please use the following:

User Name:

advertising@nrcea.education

Password: **Schooljobs!**

■ A Note of Appreciation

We, on *The Banner of Truth* Committee, wish to extend our heartfelt appreciation to Mr. John Sweetman who for eighteen years has performed the role of Subscription Manager for *The Banner of Truth*. We thank him for his untiring work performed year after year. We wish him the Lord's indispensable blessing in the unknown future, remembering him for time and eternity.

—*The Banner of Truth* Committee

■ Teachers/Assistants

CALVIN CHRISTIAN SCHOOL, COAL-HURST, ALBERTA, invites inquiries from elementary or secondary teachers for the coming school year. Teacher applicants must be eligible for Alberta certification. We also have openings for several operations positions (custodian, transportation safety coordinator): please visit www.ccs.school.ca/employment for a current listing of available positions. Applicants must be members of the NRC or a closely-related denomination. Any inquiries should be directed to the principal, Mr. Marc Slingerland, at 403-381-3030 or inquiries@ccschool.ca. Should the Lord incline your heart to apply, please submit a cover letter and resumé with references to inquiries@ccschool.ca

EBEN-EZER CHRISTIAN SCHOOL, ST. CATHARINES, ONTARIO, is inviting applications for elementary and middle school teaching positions. We would be gladdened by an inquiry and application of someone who is versatile and dedicated, who also loves the doctrine according to godliness. For more information on this position, please contact Mr. Arthur Verhoef, at principal@ecs.school.ca or call 905-563-3077.

Please send applications to the secretary of the school board, Mr. G. Brouwer, 1372 Gregory Road N., St. Catharines, Ontario, L2R 6P9. Email: gerry@ecs.school.ca

EBENEZER CHRISTIAN SCHOOL, SHEBOYGAN, WISCONSIN, is in urgent need of a teacher for the 2024-25 school year. We have a very small, multigrade classroom school. Certification is not required for this position although it would be helpful. Currently, the school board acts as principal with further oversight by the consistory. May this position and our need be bound upon someone's heart to come over and help us. For any questions regarding this position and all interested applicants, please contact Randal Teunissen at 920-828-0225 or e-mail rdteunissen@yahoo.com

NETHERLANDS REFORMED CHRISTIAN SCHOOL, ROCK VALLEY/SIOUX CENTER, IOWA, is seeking to fill openings in grades 7-12: math, elementary, physical education, and secondary teaching. Some of these posi-

Anniversary and other announcements will be placed upon request. A donation for their placement would be appreciated. Please follow directions for check payment, shown in gray area at bottom of inside front cover. For consistency, copy size is limited. Send requests to James Okken, managing editor (see contact information at bottom of inside front cover.) Requests should be made **by the first of the month prior to the month of publication.**

tions are part-time or full-time and can be combined depending upon qualifications and experience. For further information, please contact the principal, Mr. Daniel Breuer, at 712-476-2821 or dan.breuer@nrcea.org

PLYMOUTH CHRISTIAN SCHOOL, GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN, has a temporary teaching position available for the second half of the 2024-2025 school year. The open position is for upper elementary, Monday through Friday, morning hours only. An interested candidate will have a love for children, Christian education, and a teaching certificate (or working toward certification). If interested, please contact the administrator, Nathan Bleeker, at nbleeker@plymouthchristian.us

PROVIDENCE CHRISTIAN SCHOOL, KALAMAZOO, MICHIGAN invites qualified candidates to apply for elementary and middle school positions that may be open. For more information regarding possible openings or for application forms, please contact the administrator, Mr. Tom Kwekel, at tkwekel@pskzoo.com or call 616-644-2661.

REHOBOTH CHRISTIAN SCHOOL, NORWICH, ONTARIO, invites applications to fill a grade 6 and middle school positions beginning in January 2025. D.V. Applications for other teaching positions are also welcome.

For more information about the elementary opportunities, contact Mr. Andrew Korevaar, at elementaryprincipal@rcsnorwich.com or 519-495-6629.

For information about secondary opportunities, contact Mr. Gerrit TenHove, at secondaryprincipal@rcsnorwich.com or 519-536-3689.

We continue to invite inquiries about our locally developed teaching training program. Cover letters and resumes should be submitted to hr@rcsnorwich.com. Applications will be reviewed, and those applicants selected for interviews will be contacted by the school board.

■ The Banner of Truth in Audio Format

Monthly copies of the articles appearing in *The Banner of Truth* are available on MP3s and CDs for those who have reading difficulties such as poor vision. These MP3s are produced by a committee in Norwich, with the support of the Norwich consistory, who make the MP3s available to your consistory. Consistories distribute the MP3s and CDs which are provided at no cost. You may contact Mrs. Tillie Lamain at 616-242-0291 or blamain@netscape.net to arrange for a free subscription or to discontinue receiving *The Banner of Truth* on CD.



The Banner of Truth

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Prayer for Reviving

Great Shepherd of Thine Israel,
Who didst between the cherubs dwell,
And led the tribes, Thy chosen sheep,
Safe through the desert and the deep.

Thy Church is in the desert now;
Shine from on high, and guide us through;
Turn us to Thee, Thy love restore,
We shall be saved and sigh no more.

Hast Thou not planted with Thy hands
A lovely vine in heathen lands?
Did not Thy power defend it round,
And heavenly dews enrich the ground?

But now her beauty is defaced;
Why hast Thou laid her fences waste?
Strangers and foes against her join,
And every beast devours the vine.

Lord, when this vine in Canaan grew,
Thou wert its strength and glory too;
Attacked in vain by all its foes,
Till the fair Branch of promise rose.

Fair Branch, ordained of old to shoot
From David's stock, from Jacob's root;
Himself a noble vine, and we
The lesser branches of the tree.

'Tis Thy own Son, and He shall stand,
Girt with Thy strength at Thy right hand;
Thy first-born Son, adorned and blessed
With power and grace above the rest.

Oh! for His sake attend our cry,
Shine on Thy churches lest they die;
Turn us to Thee, Thy love restore,
We shall be saved and sigh no more.

—Isaac Watts